

# God The Righteous Judge

Romans 2:11-16



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**FOCAL Read Responsively** Romans 2:11-16<sup>KJV</sup> For there is no respect of persons with God. (12) **For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;** (13) (For not the hearers of the law [are] just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. (14) **For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:** (15) Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and [their] thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) (16) **In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.**

**PRAYER** Great God, in public and private, in sanctuary and home, may my life be steeped in prayer, filled with the spirit of grace and supplication, each prayer perfumed with the incense of atoning blood. Help me, defend me, until from praying ground I pass to the realm of unceasing praise. Urged by my need, invited by Thy promises, called by Thy Spirit, I enter Thy presence, worshipping Thee with godly fear, awed by Thy majesty, greatness, glory, but encouraged by Thy love.

I am all poverty as well as all guilt, having nothing of my own with which to repay Thee, but I bring Jesus to Thee in the arms of faith, pleading His righteousness to offset my iniquities, rejoicing that He

will weigh down the scales for me, and satisfy thy justice. I bless Thee that great sin draws out great grace, that, although the lest sin deserves infinite punishment because done against an infinite God, yet there is mercy for me, for where guilt is most terrible, there Thy mercy in Christ is most free and deep. Bless me by revealing to me more of His saving merits, by causing Thy goodness to pass before me, by speaking peace to my contrite heart; strengthen me to give Thee no rest until Christ shall reign supreme within me in every thought, word, and deed, in a faith that purifies the heart, overcomes the world, works by love, fastens me to Thee, and ever clings to the cross.<sup>1</sup>

### **There Is No Respect Of Persons With God**

One of the most common questions that the Christian is asked about his faith is “**What about those who have never heard of Christ?**” When this question is asked what is usually implied is “**If a person doesn't know about Jesus, then God cannot judge them and send them to hell! If salvation was never offered, then how can God send anyone to hell?**” Some people have responded to this question by *dumbing down* the Gospel. They have said that *maybe* there are other ways to God by faith. Some have said that all that is necessary for salvation is “believe in God”, and have left it at that. You may believe these things, these *departures from God's taught Scripture*, but you believe them at your own risk. The validity of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ is *not* based on fallen creation, but is *based on*

*Immortal God*. The proper reply to the question “**What about those who have never heard of Christ?**” is “**If God requires that salvation be through faith in Christ Jesus, then Almighty God will provide a way for all to hear.**” God is God, period! You may choose to *ignore what God is presently saying to you*, but your avoidance and purposeful ignorance of the truth does not *release you from responsibility before God*. God is the Judge. God has set the criteria. God is righteous, perfect, and would never (like many of our American Federal Courts) render an unjust or unfair verdict. Our Scripture tells us:

**FOCAL** Romans 2:11, 16 For **there is no respect of persons<sup>2</sup> with God. .... (16) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ** according to my gospel.

Our text tells us **there is no respect of persons with God**. The word “**respect of persons**” is a Greek word, *προσωποληψία*, *prosōpolēpsia*, (pronounced *pros-o-pol-ape-see'-ah*), which means **to show partiality or favoritism**. God does *not* show **partiality or favoritism toward any** – He has set a standard, and equal standard, and gives all people equal access to the remedy for damnation. God watches over mankind – He is, indeed, **ALMIGHTY and ALMIGHTY TO SAVE**. He has placed a certain standard to enter into His Heaven after this life, and He insures that all people are given an opportunity to come to Him through Christ. He must, for **God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ**. If

<sup>1</sup> Puritan Prayers, *Valley of Vision*

<sup>2</sup> G4382, *προσωποληψία*, *prosōpolēpsia*, *pros-o-pol-ape-see'-ah*, From G4381; *partiality*, that is, *favoritism*: - respect of persons.

that is His Sovereign Weight and Measure, then He will insure that all have an opportunity to hear of Jesus Christ.

**2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**

God **has no favoritism, nor does He show partiality**. It is within His perfect and Eternal Will that **all should come to repentance** – but we know that all will not come. If they do not come, it is not because God has not offered. If you do not pay attention to what God is saying, He is not accountable for your dullness of hearing. I heard a preacher say that all announcements in the Church must be made *seven times* before all the people will hear. Do you believe that God must offer *seven times* before He can judge you? Absolutely not! **God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ** – this is His standard. Have you accepted Christ as Savior? Have you repented of your sins, and turned to God on bended knee, believing in Christ and Christ alone – or do you wait another day, believing that God will give yet another chance? If you are not saved then **today is the day of salvation**. If you are not fully dependent on Jesus Christ as both your Lord and Savior, **today is the day to believe in Him**.

**Illustrate** The best Biblical illustration I can give you to prove that God **has no favorites** is the **case of**

**Cornelius**. Cornelius was a centurion, a General with many responsibilities within the Roman Empire. **Acts chapter 10** tells us that Cornelius was seeking the Lord one day when *an angel of God* came to him, and told him to send men to where **Simon Peter** was, and call for him to come to Cornelius' house. Cornelius obediently dispatched three men to Joppa where they would find Peter.

I want you to notice something. The angel *did not witness to Cornelius*, but told Cornelius to send men to Peter. Peter was to return and witness Jesus Christ to the centurion.

While these men were journeying to see Peter, God Himself came to Peter in a vision. During that vision Peter saw:

**Acts 10:11-15 ... heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: (12) Wherein were all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. (13) And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. (14) But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. (15) And the voice [spake] unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, [that] call not thou common.**

God prepared Cornelius' heart, Peter's heart, and after this sent Peter to witness to Cornelius. Listen to what Peter says:

Acts 10:34-45 "... **Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: (35) But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (36) The word which [God] sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) (37) That word, [I say], ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; (38) How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (39) And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: (40) Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; (41) Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, [even] to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. (42) And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to**

**testify that it is he which was ordained of God [to be] the Judge of quick and dead. (43) To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.**

God brought **Peter to Cornelius, and Cornelius' heart was prepared.** Peter then preached the Gospel - not seventy times, not seven times, but *one time*. Cornelius heard the Gospel and the Bible says that Cornelius and his men *were saved*.

Here is the answer to the question, "**What about those who never heard?**" There is no such thing. God oversees all. God is everywhere – as the Apostle said:

**Acts 17:28 KJVA For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.**

**God is no respecter of persons.** He presents Himself – and the Gospel of Jesus Christ – to the *willing heart*. God alone sees the heart, knows the heart, and weighs the heart. God knows your heart, your secrets, your willingness to be saved or not. The fact is, **people have as much of God as they want to have.** He is **no respecter of persons** – but if you want Him, He will save you, if you will heed His call. God watches. God knows. God is the Judge, and He **judges the secrets of**

men by Jesus Christ.

Can we put this excuse to bed, dear one, and just trust God to be God? If so, let's look further in this text.

### **Every Person Will Be Judged According To God's Fair Weight**

**FOCAL** Romans 2:11-13 For there is no respect of persons with God. (12) For **as many as have sinned without law shall also perish<sup>3</sup> without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;** (13) **(For not the hearers of the law [are] just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.**

Some believe in their hearts, “**If I do nothing, I will not be judged**”. Yet others believe, “**If I just hear the Law, go to Church, this is sufficient that I not be judged**”. God puts both of these misconceptions to rest in verses 12 and 13. Look at these statements:

**a. If I do nothing, I will not be judged:** This cannot be truth. Our Scripture says, **as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law**. There is no pleading of ignorance with God, for He made you. You are composed completely by Him. He made you *with a*

3 Future Middle Indicative of G622, ἀπόλλυμι, apollumi, ap-ol'-loo-mee, From G575 and the base of G3639; to *destroy* fully (reflexively to *perish*, or *lose*), literally or figuratively: - destroy, die, lose, mar, perish.

*conscience* – you know the right and the wrong though you may never have read the law. You know right and wrong, good and evil, fair and unfair – else you would have never thought out the question “**What about those who never heard?**”. This is what our context tells us:

**FOCAL** Romans 2:14-15 For when the **Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:** (15) **Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and [their] thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;**

Our text tells us that the **Gentiles – that's you and I – which have not the Law**. The Gentiles were *never* given the Law of God! Which nation was given the Law of God? **The Jews**. The Jews were *given the Law*, not the Gentiles. Remember our illustration of the **Gentile Cornelius** of a few moments ago? Cornelius was *saved apart from the Law*. **Cornelius, a Roman Centurion, was not under the Mosaic Law**. God gave the Law to Israel – *but gave conscience to everyone*. God told Israel:

**Deuteronomy 4:7-8 For what nation [is there so] great, who [hath] God [so] nigh unto them, as the LORD our God [is] in all [things that] we call upon him [for]? (8) And what nation [is there so] great, that hath statutes and judgments**

**[so] righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?**

The Law of Moses was given to the people of Moses, the Jews – not to us. But to us who *were lawless* we **show the work of the law written in our hearts, our conscience bearing them witness**. God called **Cornelius to salvation through his conscience** – and then led **Peter to him to win him to Christ**. This is God's method!

**as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law**

The Mosaic Law does not make something *sinful or not*. A thing is sinful when it is *in disobedience to God*. A thing is sinful when **God says it is sinful** – and all creation instinctively, by conscience, knows what is and is not sinful. No written law is needed to convict of sin – and **no written law can make that which is sinful to be a thing of righteousness**. For instance, in some countries **local laws support sexual perversions**. For instance, in **Las Vegas, Nevada**, what the people call “Cat Houses” or *brothels* are legal. When you walk down the streets you see frequent advertisements inviting people to the *houses of ill repute*. Listen Beloved – just because **Las Vegas** says it's fine to do it, this doesn't make it right. In God's eyes sexual perversion (any sexual activity outside of the marriage bed) is wrong – and will be judged. The Law of the land may make *idolatry* out to be righteous and a citizen's right, but we need to keep our minds on *what God says*

*is right*. The state may decree any number of things righteous, but unless **God says it is righteous**, it is yet destructive and sinful.

**b. If I just hear the Law, go to Church, this is sufficient that I not be judged:** Again, this error is addressed in our focal text. Some people think that a periodic visit and a hearing of the Law is sufficient to be judged righteous. Not so! Our text points out:

**FOCAL** Romans 2:12-13 ... **as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (13) (For not the hearers of the law [are] just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified<sup>4</sup>.**

To hear the Law and not do it does nothing for your eternal soul. Good intentions mean nothing to God. **The doers of the law shall be justified or declared righteous or innocent**. God expects us *to do*. The Word of God says:

**James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin.**

**Cornelius was given sufficient light through his conscience to send for Peter. Peter was given sufficient direction through the Spirit of God to go to Cornelius. Both men did according to that Light which God gave**

4 Future Passive Indicative of G1344, δικαιῶω, dikaiōō, dik-ah-yo'-o, From G1342; to render (that is, show or regard as) just or innocent: - free, justify (-ier), be righteous.

them. Once they did according to that Light – Peter preaching and Cornelius believing – then salvation came like a mighty tidal wave!

One of the greatest tools that Satan has is spiritual laziness and spiritual apathy. To sit, hear, and *never apply by putting into action* what you heard is a sure recipe for Divine Judgment. More people have gone to hell because they sat and chatted about silly temporal things rather than heeding the revealed Word of God. The **Scribes and Pharisees**, great keepers of the rituals of the Law, died and went to eternal damnation because they heard the Law but never responded *to the Christ of the Law*. **Only the doer of the Law shall be declared innocent by God**. What does God require of you and I? How can I be a **hearer as well as a doer**? What is His Will?

**Acts 13:38-39 Be it known unto you therefore, men [and] brethren, that through [Jesus Christ] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: (39) And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**

God's Will is that you believe on Jesus Christ and believing, you will be saved. God's Will is that your sins be forgiven as you stand in the shadow of the Cross. God's Will is that you look on the Face of Him Who died for you, love Him, believe your sins are on Him. God's

Will is that, trusting in Jesus, that God Himself come and be a continued part of your life. God's Will is that every person who is saved by faith realize that *salvation is not the end of your journey, but the beginning*. That God has a work for your life, a calling for your life, and bids you surrender *all of that life to Him*.

You shall be judged.

Will you be judged on your own base works? Or will you be judged based on your adherence to the Mosaic Law? Or, dear One, will you be judged based on **your active relationship with Jesus Christ**. You will be judged – and so will I. Are you in Christ?

**Are You Ready For Your Secrets To Be Judged?**

**FOCAL** Romans 2:16 In the day when **God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.**

I have often thanked God that others could not read my thoughts – and I'm sure that you have done the same! I have seen science fiction movies and read books where people could *read one another's thoughts* or could *speak telepathically*. God has not designed us in that way – and this alone, in my opinion, is one of the greatest proofs of His love for us. If creatures such as us were telepathic, our secret thoughts exposed, it would not be long before we self destructed and left this planet to the animals and insects. There are secret thoughts in my mind that I would never desire to share with anyone. We are all that way, sinners, prone to failure.

Praise God that He shall never judge my secrets *without looking through the lens of Christ's Cross*. **God shall judge the secrets of David by Jesus Christ**. He must weigh everything by what Jesus did on that cross, for I believe in Him.

If you are a Christian, then

**Colossians 3:3-4 ... ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, [who is] our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.**

Have you believed on Jesus? Is He a part of your life? Is He your Lord, your Best Friend, your Guide? Then your life is hid in Him – you will one day be with Him in glory.

If you are a Christian – not just in word, but *in reality*, then you live to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. **God is no respecter of persons**. If you are saved, then you were saved to be a son of God. Serve Him with all your heart! The Scripture says:

**Colossians 3:23-25 And whatsoever ye do, do [it] heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; (24) Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. (25) But he that doeth wrong shall**

**receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.**

Live your life for Jesus! He died for you, He paid for your life, and you are now in Him. On that future day when the Bible says:

**Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.**

that will not be for you. That terrible White Throne is reserved for those who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who see that terrible Throne will not see it with rejoicing. When you, O Christian, enter Heaven it will be with great introduction and fanfare. When you enter Heaven the angels will sing, just as they sang on the day you were saved. **“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. (Luke 15:10)**. The day you accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord there was rejoicing in Heaven, and there will be rejoicing on that day you see Him in yonder glory. The unbeliever, however, will not rejoice – the unbeliever **never resisted the devil so that he fled from him (James 4:7), neither did he run away from the love of money (1 Timothy 6:11) to pursue God**. The unbeliever proved his profession false by failing to **love God and love his neighbor** as our Lord so commands all that are His **(Romans 13:10; Matthew 22:37-40)**.

Every secret shall be judged – praise God that our secrets

– the secrets of the Christian – **shall be judged by Jesus Christ**. The Umpire of your destiny will be the One Who redeemed you – Jesus Christ. *If you know Him know, He will know you then.* Listen Beloved:

**FOCAL** Romans 2:16 In the day when **God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.**

There has never been a true Christian who was redeemed where there was not also an *outward transformation to evidence the inward transformation*. I know a wolf because it looks wolveren. It has thick hair, claws, long tearing teeth, and in behavior it runs about looking for sheep to slaughter so as to fill up its appetites. The wolf chases the things of this world, and destroys as it will to satisfy its desires. The sheep, on the other hand, has no claws, no fangs, no tearing teeth. In behavior the sheep runs about with other sheep. The Shepherd does not need to chase sheep back to the flock, for the sheep know their protection is in the Shepherd. When the Shepherd looks upon the sheep He knows those who are His – they are changed from wolf to sheep. The great preacher **C.H. Spurgeon** said:

**“The Gospel offers you no opportunity of going on in sin and escaping without punishment. It's own cry is, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Jesus has not come into the world to make sin less terrible. Nothing in the Gospel excuses sin; nothing in it affords toleration for lust or anger, or dishonesty, or falsehood. The Gospel is as truly a two-edged sword against sin as ever the law can be. There is Grace for**

**the man who quits his sin, but there is tribulation and wrath upon every man that doeth evil. If ye turn not He will whet His sword; He hath bent His bow, and made it ready. The Gospel is all tenderness to the repenting, but all terror to the obstinate offender. It has pardon for the very chief of sinners, and mercy for the vilest of the vile, if they will forsake their sins; but it is according to our Gospel that he that goeth on in his iniquity shall be cast into hell, and he that believeth not shall be damned.”**

If you have turned to Christ, and looked upon Him unto salvation, then He bids you be part of His flock. **Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me. See on the portals He's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me.** Will you not **come home** to Him while there is yet time? Judgment is coming – Oh, dear ones, do not let that day come on you unawares.

**Illustrate** God *is* love – this is what most people enjoy emphasizing. To be sure the Scripture testifies that He *is* love (**1 John 4:8, 16**). God loves you with an infinite love. Our favorite Scripture is in John 3:16-17, which reads **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”** God not only *is* love, but God has *always* been love – and He is the Savior of His people (**Isaiah 63:8**). But listen, Beloved – God's love is *always* balanced with His righteousness. God is righteous – He will one day judge the secrets of mankind by Jesus Christ.

Recently we had a rather large slab of concrete poured for an upcoming building project. The contractor worked hard to properly prepare the ground. He leveled the ground, compacted it, and dug reinforcing trenches where the concrete was to be poured. He then put a plastic sheet on the ground to prevent moisture from leeching up into his work, then put metal wire and rods on top of the plastic. He finished up by enclosing the entire area with a solid wooden form or fence. When the concrete was poured it stayed within the boundaries of the prepared ground in a way that would have been impossible had the contractor tried cutting corners. There are no thin spots, nor sunken areas. The groundwork was done by a professional who knew what he was doing. As a Church we had to trust the contractor, for he alone had the expertise and the tools to do what was necessary.

God is love, but His love is governed by the ground of His righteousness. His love must *always* stay within the boundaries of that righteousness, otherwise His love would be imperfect, sunken in spots, thin in some areas. The Bible does say **“God so loved the world”**, but God could not say, **“come on into My Heaven”** until He properly prepared the way. To allow unrepentant and sinful people into Heaven would be to make Heaven a Hell – and such a thing is totally inconsistent with the God of the Holy Bible. God is love, He is *righteous love*.

The Bible doesn't just say **“God so loved the world”**, but goes on to say **“that He gave His only Begotten Son”**. God laid the foundation of our salvation by sending Jesus Christ to die for our sins. **“He hath made**

**Christ (Who is sinless) to be sin on our behalf - so that we could be made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21)**. God's righteousness must be satisfied – His love cannot leave the form of that righteousness. So God **“gave His only Begotten Son”** to the world. Does this mean that everyone is *automatically saved and allowed to enter into Heaven*? No, dear friends, absolutely not. The text continues, **“that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”**. God has prepared the ground. God has made Christ to be a curse for us - **“cursed is everyone who hangs on the Tree” (Galatians 3:13)**. The Lord Jesus Christ bore your sins and my sins on Calvary's Cross. The Way is made, the Road to Heaven is paved, the Love of God offered – will you accept it? Will you repent of your sins, and turn to Jesus Christ in faith? Will you call on Him, believing that Jesus died for you? Will you trust God – the Righteous Judge – and cast all your hope on the Savior?

If you will not, I pray that you remember these words that I saw on one local Church's outdoor sign. That sign read, **“How many times will you drive by this Church on the way to Hell?”** How many times will you hear the preacher cry out to you? How many times will he beg you, with tears in his eyes, until you repent? How many times will the Spirit of God strive with you, reminding you God is the Righteous Judge? Oh dear ones, do not despise his offering. God alone has the means to save you. Do not try to get to Heaven apart from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. May God touch your hearts with these words.